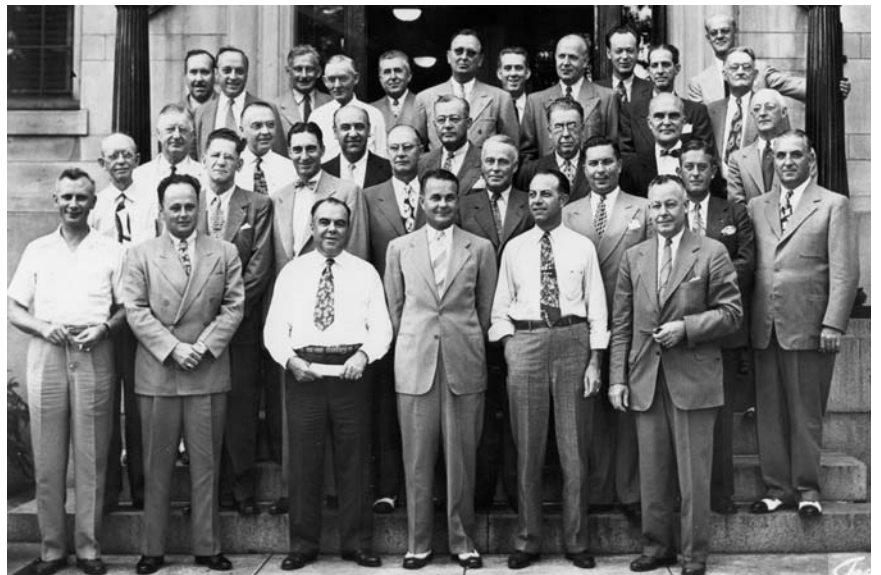


This Brief History of the **ATA**

is adapted from the book "Partner in Progress: The Story of the American Trucking Associations," by J.R. "Bob" Halladay and supplemented by other ATA documents.

In 1933, as the nation was wallowing in the Great Depression, President Franklin D. Roosevelt was inaugurated, setting in motion events that would lead to creation of the American Trucking Associations. Among the early objectives of President Roosevelt's "New Deal" was congressional passage of the National Industry Recovery Act and the subsequent creation of the National Recovery Administration (NRA). Under NRA, each major industry was required to submit and comply with a Code of Fair Competition that established minimum wages, maximum hours of work and other rules.



State trucking association executives meet in 1945 at ATA headquarters at 1424 16th St. NW, Washington, D.C. Principal ATA founder Ted V. Rodgers is in the front row, third from left.

Speaking for the trucking industry were two fledgling organizations. The American Highway Freight Association was a group of common carriers that had been put together primarily at the instigation of Ted V. Rodgers of Pennsylvania, Jack Keeshin of Illinois and John Blood of Kansas. The Federated Trucking Associations of America (FTAA) consisted of trucking organizations operating essentially at the state level. States with trucking associations that predated ATA (and listed here from oldest to youngest, approximately) were New Jersey, Ohio, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Washington, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Vermont, North Carolina, Illinois, Nebraska, Virginia, Indiana, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, West Virginia and Washington, D.C.

About half of those state associations were members of the FTAA. The FTAA had been established by A.J. Brousseau of Pennsylvania and Frank Schmidt, an Ohio truck operator. Brousseau was president of the Mack Motor Truck Company, as well as an official of the National Automobile Chamber of Commerce — the predecessor of what is today the American Automobile Manufacturers Association. Edward F. Loomis, of the National Automobile Chamber of Commerce, directed the affairs of the FTAA.

The groups put together a meeting of trucking executives from throughout the country in Chicago in the spring of 1933 to create a Code of Fair Competition. The meeting produced more disagreement than agreement and instead of one code, nearly one hundred were offered. That was too much for the administrator of the NRA, Gen. Hugh Johnson, who told the trucking industry to write a Code of Fair Competition or he would write one they probably wouldn't like.

The two organizations convened again in Washington in the summer of 1933, producing the fundamentals of a Code of Fair Competition and a decision to fold the two groups into a national trucking organization to be known as the American Trucking Associations (ATA). Ted V. Rodgers was unanimously chosen as President of the new ATA. The ATA Certificate of Incorporation filed in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 23, 1933, noted the purpose of ATA was to educate on matters affecting the operation of motor vehicles, teams and drays, including safety facilities, safety devices and laws governing such operations.

ATA opened for business in three

small rooms in the Transportation Building on Seventeenth and H Streets, NW, in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 1, 1933. Crafting the final Fair Code of Competition was the first order of business. It was not easy by any means and required several months of hard work. The task was completed and submitted to General Johnson, who passed it along to President Roosevelt, who approved it on Feb. 10, 1934.

All that remained was to get final approval by the NRA, sign up the individual companies and truck operators, and bring trucking as an industry under the wings of the "Blue Eagle," the symbol of the NRA. ATA itself had its own special interest because it was to be the administrator of the industry's code and badly needed the income the federal government would provide for that service. Rodgers had been appointed chairman of the National Code Authority, the governing body for the trucking industry under the NRA.

Preparation of the completed document took longer than anticipated. Meanwhile, Rodgers learned that the NRA division administrator, who had to give his approval, was going to be taking a train trip to the west coast that would keep him out of Washington for several weeks. That would have further delayed ATA's expected income just that much longer. Rodgers determined the administrator's train schedule, jumped on an airplane and followed the train's route west. Sometime after midnight, he landed in Pittsburgh and immediately boarded the

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ATA President Ted V. Rodgers meets with staff in the original ATA offices on Seventeenth and H Streets.

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train. The first thing next morning, Rodgers was waiting for the NRA official when he entered the washroom of his Pullman car.

Rodgers returned to his home in Scranton, Pa., to be the first truck operator in the country to sign the new code. That was on May 21, 1934. Rodgers had the first special "Blue Eagle" license plate, indicating compliance with the code. Most significant to the chaotic trucking industry was the requirement that each participant file and observe a "schedule of minima for rates and tariff." The ATA Registration Bulletin reported: "The code ... will eliminate chiseling within the industry and will afford a formidable argument against cutting of rates by competitors outside the industry."

Rodgers called ATA's first annual convention in Chicago in October 1934 "the most representative aggregation of truck owners ever assembled in one room." He noted that in just one year ATA had set up a Rates and Tariffs Division; a Legislative Division; a Safety and Insurance Committee; a Legal Division; and a Publicity Department.

The ATA president also described the new organization's money problems, which began with the inheritance of \$20,000 in debts of the two groups which preceded it. ATA was kept afloat by contributions amounting to \$20,000 from four individual truck manufacturers and the American Petroleum Institute.

Life under the NRA proved short. Scarcely a year after ATA put its code into operation, the U.S. Supreme Court declared on a Friday in May 1935 that the National Industrial Recovery Act was unconstitutional. ATA General Manager John V. Lawrence recalled that on the following day, he had to dismiss 43 staff members. All had been part

of the large expansion of ATA needed to administer the NRA code.

Despite this setback, ATA began again to grow. In 1936, the association abandoned its three rooms in the Transportation Building in Washington, D.C., for larger space in the Investment Building at 15th and K streets NW. The following year ATA moved again to lease a mansion at 16th and K streets NW. The mansion, previously the home of Sen. James Couzens of Michigan, is now the site of the Capital Hilton Hotel.

One way the federation grew was to add conferences. In the 1930s, the federation added three conferences: the Film, Air and Package Carriers Conference; the National Automobile Transporters Association; and the Regular Common Carrier Conference.

THE 1940s — WAR

As if ATA already had not been enough of a nomadic troupe, the first years of the new decade brought another move. A \$35,000 enticement from a developer to terminate the lease of the Couzens mansion led ATA to purchase a seven-story apartment building at the corner of 16th and P streets NW.

The advent of World War II brought to the trucking industry more perplexing and serious problems than ever before, and every one became, in turn, the problem of ATA as the industry's representative. Shortage of vitally needed equipment and supplies compelled ATA to establish special departments to handle such items as manpower, fuel and rubber and to expand activities of other departments such as operations and traffic service. The Office of Defense Transportation was created to coordinate cooperation between ATA and the War and Navy departments.

A high point for the trucking industry came when the Army requested ATA recruit personnel for two quartermaster regiments that would become the U.S. Army Transportation Corps. With calls to the 350 members of the ATA's Trucking Service War Council, 5,700 trucking industry

YOU'VE GOT A DATE WITH A U-BOAT -

At Nine Tomorrow Night!

Every truck you see on the road is helping to speed our war effort

It's four o'clock Sunday afternoon. Freight offices are closed—but the truck dispatchers are on the job. The telephone rings ...

DISPATCHER: Lieutenant Thompson calling. OPERATOR: Put 'im on.

LIEUT. T.: That you, Steve? Listen! We need 300 depth bombs delivered here by four tomorrow afternoon.

DISPATCHER: Good lord, Sir! That's 20 truck loads. There aren't that many trucks in town today. And it's a 275 mile run!

LIEUT. T.: Don't care if it takes a hundred trucks, Steve. Any other way would take a week. And we've got to have those bombs. The German subs won't wait.

DISPATCHER: O. K., Lieutenant. Do my best.

6:30 P.M. — Telephone calls catch 15 others on the road ... re-route them into town.

9:00 P.M. — All trucks now are loaded and rolling.

1:00 A.M. — 100 miles covered; 175 miles to go.

3:30 A.M. — 175 miles covered; 100 miles to go.

7:30 A.M. — Entire shipment of depth bombs unloaded at destination.

9:00 P.M. — Patrol boats at sea ... ready for action.

5:00 P.M. — Five trucks loaded and on their way.

Highway transportation is like that! Amazing flexibility. Unbelievable delivery speed—even on long hauls. With freight-rate economy!

But spectacular as these "truck" shipments are—trucking performs its greatest service in handling the daily flow of material and parts between war production lines ... in routine operation.

Our nation's entire production system is geared to trucks. That is why it is our patriotic duty—today more than ever before—to maintain America's highway transportation system—and keep its trucks ... its trailers ... and its men ... working at peak efficiency.

It is to this duty that the American Trucking Associations and its members are dedicated.

AMERICAN TRUCKING ASSOCIATIONS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 25, 1942

employees volunteered for enlisted positions and 258 volunteered for officer commissions.

ATA marked its 10th anniversary in October 1943 with a 71-page progress report from the staff to the board of directors and members that gave a snapshot of the federation during wartime but also predicted trouble when peace came. The report's summary commented:

"The pace of events in war is terrific. There is little time for debate and little for consultation. Courses of action are decided upon and made effective in days, where in peacetime, months would be required. This throws upon your association a grave responsibility and an almost impossible procedural requirement. ... ATA is now engaged in the dual task of handling the industry's problems at war and at the same time looking ahead to the great problems which will confront the trucking industry in the post-war period. With the continued help of the industry expressed directly and through the affiliated state associations, the job will be done."

Despite the pressures of wartime, ATA continued to grow, with the addition between 1941 and 1945 of four conferences: Interstate Truckload Carriers Conference; Regional and Distribution Carriers Conference; American Movers Conference; and National Tank Truck Carriers.

After the war, an ATA committee named for Past Chairman (President) E.J. Buhner of Kentucky was formed to review the structure of the three-legged federation, which consisted of the state associations, the conferences and councils, and the headquarters operation. This structure was reaffirmed by Buhner Committee, which met from 1944 to 1947. Part of that committee's task was to prepare for the retirement of ATA's principal founder Ted V. Rodgers, who served as president from 1933 to 1947. After his retirement, the ATA presidency was converted to an elected member position with a one-year term. Eventually that position was renamed Chairman of the Board.

THE 1950s

The new decade saw ATA engaging directly with railroads, as then Research Director William A. Bresnahan participated in a series of debates with railroad spokesmen around the country, challenging the rails' claim that trucks were not paying their fair share of taxes. After two years, the railroads declined to debate further, but later resurrected the theme.

In 1953, ATA paused to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the American trucking industry. The dawn of the trucking industry was declared to have been 1903, the year that



In 1953, the trucking industry's 50th anniversary was celebrated with a special 3-cent stamp.

the Automobile Club of America arranged a two-day contest in New York City pitting 11 trucks and light-delivery wagons powered by steam, gasoline or electricity against horse-drawn wagons. The mechanically powered vehicles won the contest.

Fifty years after the horses' need to rest on hills gave victory to trucks, U.S. Postmaster General Arthur E. Summerfield addressed a special gathering at the ATA's annual conference at the Hotel Statler in Los Angeles. Summerfield presented albums of a commemorative 3-cent postage stamp labeled "50th Anniversary of the Trucking Industry." The stamp depicted a truck cab and driver in the foreground with a farm, factories and a city in the background. ATA President Walter F. Carey presided over the luncheon program as ATA co-founder and Honorary Chairman for Life Ted V. Rodgers Sr. accepted albums on behalf of ATA. International Brotherhood of Teamsters General President Dave Beck also spoke.

The year 1953 also marked the birth of the ATA Foundation, which would later become the American Transportation Research Institute. That same year, ATA was promoting a substantial federal highway program. Director of Public Relations and Assistant to the Chairman of the Board Walter W. Belson worked with the Highway Users Federation to promote "Project Adequate Roads."

The year 1955 was a turning point for the federal highway program, for the trucking industry and for ATA. President Eisenhower, who had seen the impact of Germany's autobahns, had proposed construction of the Interstate

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Highway System, which had been on the drawing board for several years. ATA had been in the forefront of the groups and industries supporting the idea.

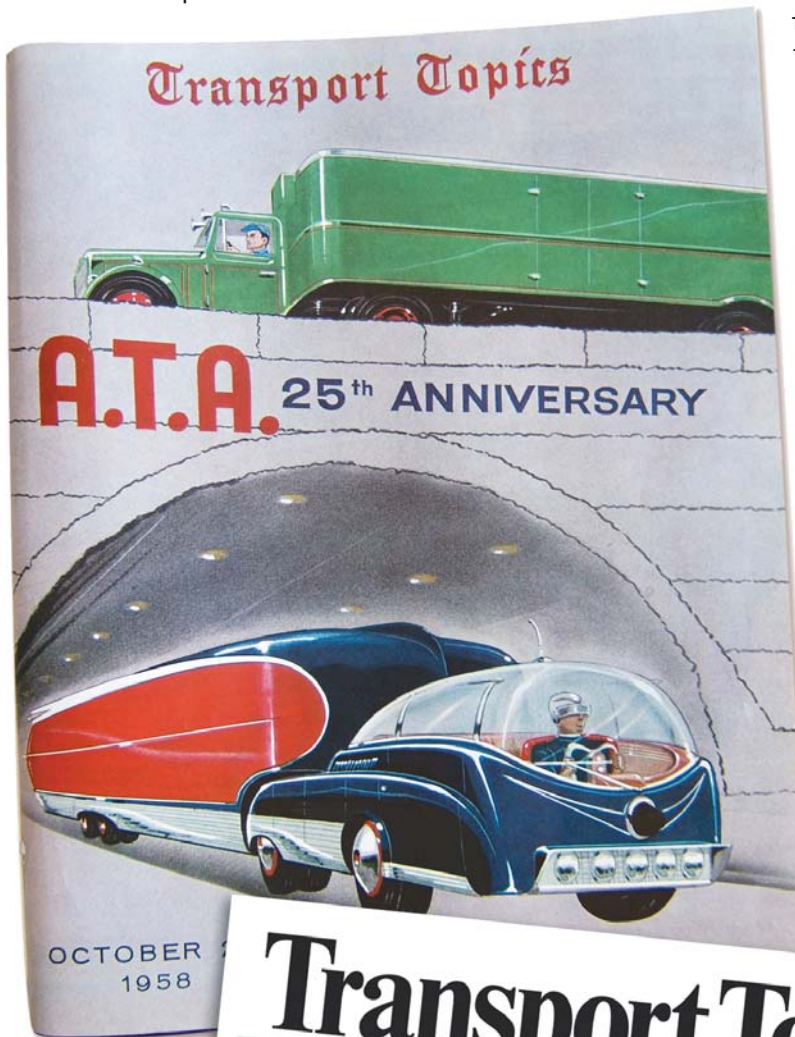
Enactment appeared likely in 1955 — until a Maryland congressman proposed imposition of special taxes upon the trucking industry that were totally intolerable. ATA had to reverse course and initiate an all-out effort to oppose the program.

In July 1955, ATA had convened a meeting of the state association executives (the first meeting of what became the Trucking Association Executives Council) in New Orleans, primarily to bring them up to date on the highway program. As it happened, the Maryland congressman's tax plan moved to the top of the congressional calendar at the same time. In a desperate move to

increase firepower, ATA asked that the meeting be adjourned and that the state managers go immediately from New Orleans to Washington for on-the-scene lobbying of their state delegations. Nearly all were able to make the emergency trip, and the onerous tax bill was defeated.

The need for a highway program was as great as ever of course and congressional leaders, particularly Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn, mandated its supporters to come back the following year with an acceptable financing plan. The coordinated effort culminated in the passage of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956, the beginning of the System of Interstate and National Defense Highways, the largest peacetime public works program in history. There was a cost. Congress increased the federal fuel tax from 2 cents to 3 cents a gallon; the truck and trailer excise tax went from 8 percent to 10 percent; the tire tax went from 6 cents to 8 cents per pound; a new tread rubber tax was set at 3 cents a pound; and a federal use tax of \$1.50 per 1,000 pounds was imposed on trucks more than 26,000 pounds gross vehicle weight.

In 1959, ATA again outgrew its quarters and purchased property at 1616 P St. NW, next door to the building it had owned since 1941. ATA constructed a six-story office building and moved one door down to its new home.



In 1968, Congress at the last minute failed to enact an ATA-backed proposal to increase truck sizes and weights, which had been frozen in 1956. The Senate had passed the measure on a near-unanimous vote. When the bill reached the House, prospects remained encouraging until many newspapers around the country unleashed what President William A. Bresnahan termed a "scurrilous attack. Some papers even refused to run paid ATA advertising telling the industry's side of the story. It would be six more years before Congress thawed the federal size and weight freeze.

In the late 1960s, ATA made itself a fixture on Capitol Hill by renting space in the old Congressional Hotel for its government affairs offices. In 1974, it bought properties on First Street, SE, and built Hill offices. Later, more properties were added, and currently a \$10 million renovation of the properties into a single building with a 50-car underground parking garage is under way.

The Capitol Hill building was named for Bresnahan, who led the staff from 1964 to 1976 and was the first ATA staff executive to hold the

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title of president. Edward F. Loomis (1934-35), John V. Lawrence (1935-64) had lesser titles.

DEREGULATION

Beginning with Eisenhower, every President advocated that the trucking industry be deregulated. For 25 years, ATA successfully warded off those attempts. In anticipation of increased effort by the deregulators, the ATA Executive Committee in 1975 established a special committee to monitor the situation and review the industry's position. It functioned for nearly five years under the chairmanship of Past Chairman of the Board C. James McCormick of Indiana.

As deregulation continued to heat up during the late 1970s, it became the most divisive matter to confront the industry in years. Some carriers saw potential gain; others saw disaster. And, ultimately, both proved right. Shippers, particularly large ones, generally supported deregulation. ATA's longstanding policy against any kind of change in the regulatory structure gradually was revised to accept some adjustments but to preserve the basic foundation. While economic deregulation was a huge challenge, so was the push to increase safety regulations, some of which had no promise of improving the highways.

In 1978, there was a huge push to change the drivers' hours-of-service regulations, but ATA was able to show that the proposed changes were unlikely to substantially reduce the number of truck crashes. All realized, however, that the hours of service needed some updating, however, and ATA assisted the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration in developing new hours of service in 2003 that have withstood court challenges while all measures of truck safety have continued to improve.

Bennett C. Whitlock Jr., who was ATA president from 1976 to 1984, said the regulatory battle was a huge challenge. "Trying to keep everybody

in the tent was the toughest job we had," he said. "We couldn't solve one problem for one group without creating a problem for another."

ATA launched a full-bore attack against deregulation, holding regional meetings to inform the industry and rally support for the ATA position. A national PR firm was hired, media contacts were increased and the editorial response was surprisingly supportive in many areas, but not universal. About 200 people were recruited for an ATA

"The ATA and the state trucking associations are a little about trucks and a lot about people — the people who operate them and the people who are served by them."

— Kenny Cragen,
Indiana Motor Truck Association,
TAEAC Chairman, 2008-09

speakers bureau for appearances before local business and civic organizations. ATA produced a movie titled "The Dividing Line" to illustrate the need for a system of rules and regulations.

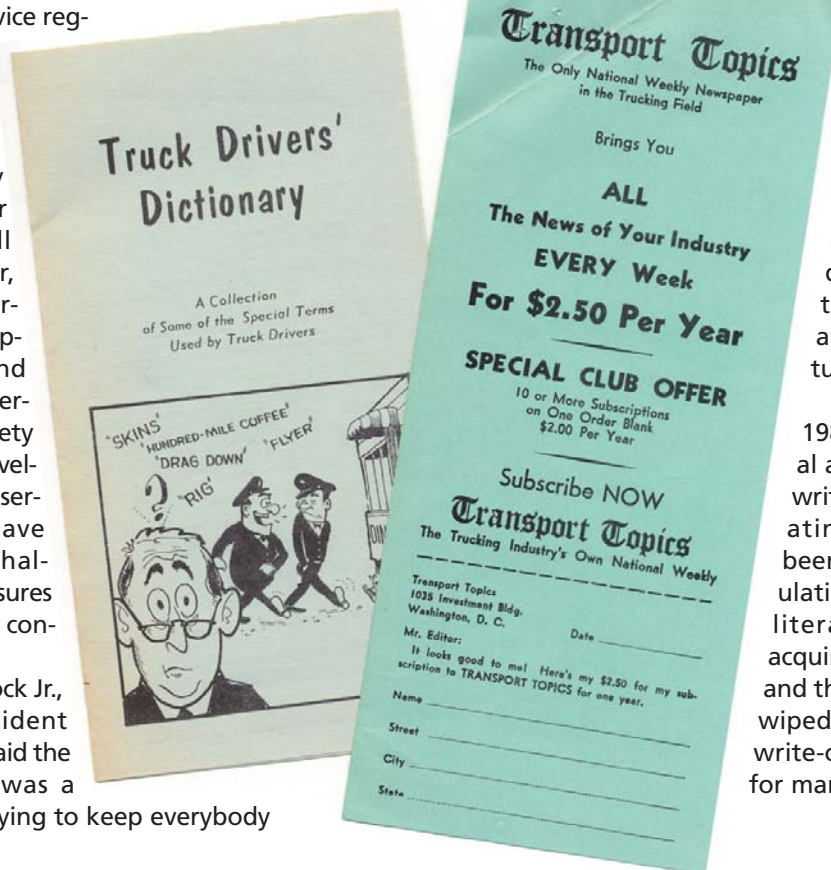
The deregulation tide could not be stopped, however, and legislation passed in the spring

of 1980. But there was some victory in defeat.

"The trucking industry acted with unity in a firm, yet calculating manner to oppose reform; and it alone secured legislative provisions that in any significant way limited deregulation and competition," according to the authors of a Brookings Institution report.

In a follow-up effort in 1981, ATA won congressional approval of a five-year tax write-off of the value of operating authorities that had been destroyed by the deregulation bill. Carriers had spent literally millions of dollars acquiring those operating rights and the deregulation legislation wiped out that investment. The write-off was a tangible benefit for many companies.

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Soon after, Congress began considering an update of the Federal Highway Program. ATA Chairman Richard L. Few appointed a committee in October 1981 to review ATA's highway policy objectives. The next year, ATA recommendations were decided and submitted to the House Public Works and Transportation Subcommittee on Surface Transportation. Size and weight adjustments and tax increases were part of the recommendations.

Part of the issue under debate was what to do with interstate highway size and weight limits that had changed little since they were created in 1956, with the total gross weight maximum at 73,280 pounds. States were allowed to have lower maximums, so the nation remained a patchwork of regulations. Congress raised the federal maximums again in 1974, with total gross weight set at 80,000 pounds. States were still permitted lower maximums, but by 1981, all but three states had raised their maximums to 80,000 pounds.

Meanwhile, an effort started by the ATA Executive Committee in 1979 united ATA members from the West and the East in support of size and weight regulatory reform. The newly created Special Industry Size and Weight Committee established an agenda.

The Surface Transportation Assistance Act, passed by Congress in December 1982, mandated size and weight standards for the states, but it was less than the industry, particularly in the Western states, pushed for. While there were substantial improvements in size and weight limits, the gains carried a price of higher taxes. A revision of the so-called heavy truck use tax resulted in those trucks paying as much as \$1,900 a year on the most commonly used combinations. A backlash helped persuade Congress to cut the maximum use tax back to \$550, with lost revenues replaced through collection of a more equitable special tax on diesel fuel. The federal fuel tax increased in 1983 by 5 cents, with one cent going to mass transit and the rest to the Highway Trust Fund.

A major development in evolution of the ATA was the Few Committee, named for Past Chairman Richard L. Few and formed in 1983 to fight the demoralization caused by deregulation and tax increases, and to strengthen the federation. The following year, the committee presented its "Blueprint for Change," which reconstituted several committees; restructured ATA staff; improved coordination between ATA, conferences and state associations; signaled that the industry is "a more professional, more

progressive, more public-oriented industry;" and named a committee to restructure dues. The new dues structure was put into effect in 1985 and significantly increased the number of dues-paying companies by allowing carriers and allied industry companies to be direct members of ATA and stipulating that no one could serve on ATA's policy-making bodies without being a member in good standing.

"The industry was looking for change, and I had the pleasure of appointing a special committee to review ATA and its operations," said 1982-83 Chairman Ross C. Gaussoin. "We held regional hearings and took testimony from the industry members and organizations. ... The final report was well received, and I believe all of the recommendations, of which there were many, were implemented. It was later necessary to accept Bennett's resignation."

With a new executive, ATA would get a new building. In 1984, ATA moved its headquarters from Washington, D.C., to a modern glass structure it built in Alexandria, Va., where it would remain until ATA sold that property and leased several floors of an Arlington, Va., high-rise in 2007.



"The genius about American Trucking Associations is the "S" at the end. The federation, the three-legged stool (ATA, conferences and state associations) has stood the test of time. Our strong national association, the unique perspective of the conferences, and the grass-roots power of 50 state trucking associations have accomplished remarkable things over the past 75 years."

— Mike Riley,
Motor Transport Association of Connecticut

A new search committee chose Tom Donahue as the ATA's new president and CEO. Donahue's top priority for ATA was highway safety. During Donahue's tenure, Congress passed legislation providing for a single Commercial Driver License; created mandatory, random drug testing for drivers; increased federal funding for roadside truck inspections; and eliminated commercial zones where carriers did not have to comply with safety regulations.

Safety was not a new goal. The ATA National Truck Safety contest had been conducted continuously since 1935, and the National Truck Driving Championships and myriad other programs reflected ATA's safety agenda.

America's Road Team, ATA's champion drivers and safety spokesmen, debuted in 1986, and several more programs have been developed since then.

ATA continued to fight higher taxes on the industry and expanded the use of coalitions to advance industry objectives. Fighting higher taxes was a frequent objective, and ATA helped to bury suggestions to increase fuel taxes by as much as 50 cents a gallon to reduce the federal deficit or fund nonhighway government efforts. In 1990, Congress increased the fuel tax by 5 cents a gallon, with half for deficit reduction and half for highway programs. In 1993, Congress raised the fuel tax again, this time by 4.3 cents a gallon, but also diverted the amount of the 1990 increases devoted to deficit reduction, with 2 cents going to the Highway Trust Fund and one-half cent to mass transit.

Also in the early 1990s, ATA took a lead role in advocating free trade and the North American Free Trade Agreement with Canada and Mexico, an issue that is still roiling today.

In 1997, Donohue accepted an offer to return to the

U.S. Chamber of Commerce, where he had been a vice president before coming to ATA. A member selection committee unanimously picked Walter B. McCormick Jr. to lead the federation. In response to concerns about the budget and dues levels, the Board of Directors approved a plan to cut costs and the number of ATA employees and to sever ties between ATA and several industry groups that were part of the federation.

By 2001, McCormick had departed to lead USTelecom, another Washington-based industry association. ATA's leadership then appointed two new presidents. Former Counselor to the President William Canary would take the helm until January 2003, when Bill Graves would complete his second term as governor of Kansas and take over ATA. It was a trucking industry homecoming for Gov. Graves, whose father and grandfather founded the successful Graves Truck Line in Kansas.

After nearly six years leading ATA, Gov. Graves has earned praise for increasing the stability to the federation and its influence in Washington, D.C., and across the country. ■

Congratulations!



The backbone of the trucking industry
for 75 years.



Wabash National would like to congratulate ATA on 75 years in the trucking industry.